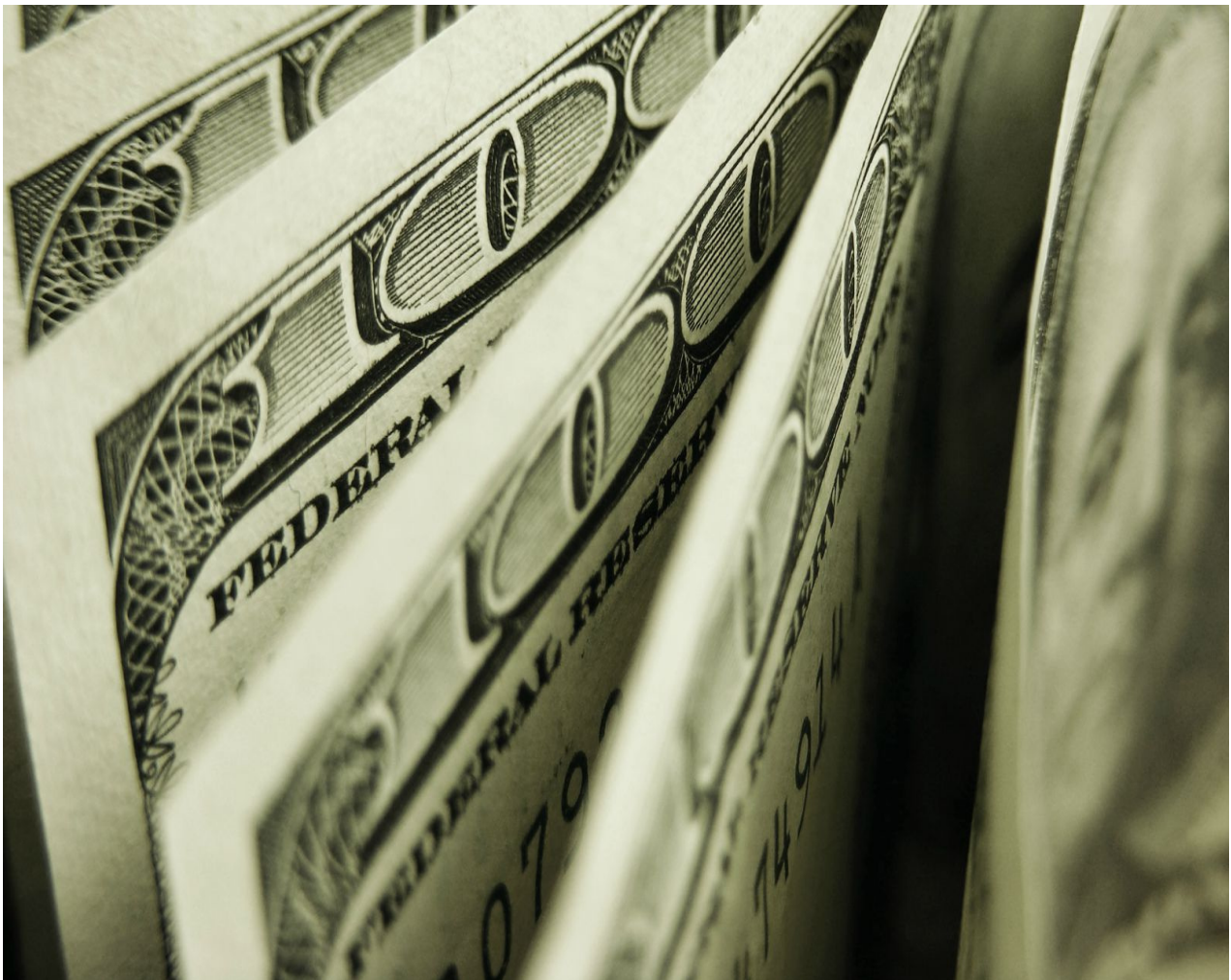


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Bryan Administration Releases Another \$5 Million In Income Tax Refunds, \$24 Million To Go This Year To Keep Pace With Predecessor

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The Bryan administration announced Wednesday that it had released another \$5 million of income tax refunds to Virgin Islanders owed by the government.

According to a Government House release, the latest batch of refunds includes 2,580 checks for the 2016 tax year, and represents all returns filed through April 18, 2017 -- "except for those with errors or that were selected for audit," according to Bureau of Internal Revenue Director Joel Lee.

The administration said it has paid \$26.5 million in income tax refunds to more than 12,000 tax filers since Mr. Bryan took office. The figure accounts for \$23.8 million in refunds and \$2.7 million in interest owed, according to Government House.

Mr. Bryan highlighted some \$75 million set aside in his fiscal year 2020 budget to pay tax refunds, and said it was an example of his administration's commitment to pay residents monies they are owed by the government.

During his four-year tenure, Governor Kenneth Mapp had paid nearly \$200 million in tax refunds to Virgin Islanders, [after lifting a tax refunds issuance freeze](#) in February 2015 upon taking office. For Mr. Bryan to keep up and surpass his predecessor's pace of issuing refunds, he would have to release roughly \$50 million in tax refunds every year for four years.

With just three months remaining in 2019, the administration has paid \$26.5 million -- \$24.5 million more to go.

The governor could also release greater amounts in different years to meet or surpass Mr. Mapp's total.

"Stabilizing and restoring the trust of the people in their government is one of the priorities of my administration. That means paying taxpayers their income tax refunds, addressing the debt owed to WAPA, and it certainly means addressing the retroactive pay owed to our government employees past and present," the governor said, in a nod to retirees who [recently protested outside Government House on St. Croix](#), calling for their retroactive pay.